

HSEU eForum

February 2026, Issue 87

Welcome to the February eForum. Read below for more information about the HSEU's Housing Support Funding and Impact Event, updates to COSLA non-residential social care charging guidance, and trial use of CHI numbers in social care.

HSEU to host Housing Support Funding Event

The HSEU will host a networking event on Thursday 5th March in Edinburgh to discuss the strategic importance and delivery of housing support.

This networking event will be an opportunity to consider the housing support funding landscape, identify key challenges and pragmatic responses, and share aspirations for the next government. We will listen to your reflections on the housing emergency ahead of a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Housing, offering a link between provider organisations and the Scottish Government.

Share learning with fellow provider organisations and hear case studies of how organisations have responded to funding challenges.

Sign up [here](#) to attend.

Call for Pilot Projects to Trial Use of CHI Number in Social Care

COSLA and Public Health Scotland have appealed for early adopters in commissioned social care to develop use cases for Community Health Index (CHI) numbers as individual identifiers and create a more joined-up health and social care system. The team aims to expand the use of CHI numbers across health and care services and reduce duplication of efforts.

For any questions or to become an early adopter, please contact Claire Ross at COSLA (claire.ross@digitaloffice.scot).

Scottish Government Announces National Housing Agency, More Homes Scotland

The Scottish Government has announced [plans](#) to establish a new national housing agency, More Homes Scotland. The agency would begin operating from 2027-28 and be fully functional in 2028-29, subject to the outcome of the Holyrood election. The First Minister has said the agency would focus on “simplicity, scale and speed” for the delivery of housing of all types to meet housing need.

The focus would be on: large-scale affordable housing projects; rural and island housing; acquiring, preparing and releasing land; enabling infrastructure work to unlock stalled sites; and closer working with the Scottish National Investment Bank to make best use of private finance.

The Cabinet Secretary for Housing will lead a process to co-design the functions and operating model in partnership with local authorities and the Scottish National Investment Bank, with an update expected in March.

Consultation Launched on Extension of FOISA to Care Homes and Care at Home Services

The Scottish Government has launched a [consultation](#) on the extension of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act to private and third sector providers of care home and care at home services.

The consultation closes on Monday 30 March. CCPS will be submitting a collective CCPS response.

Latest Homelessness Statistics Published

The latest [homelessness statistics](#) have been released, covering the six-month period from 1 April to 30 September 2025. There was a 2% decrease in the number of homelessness applications from 2024, and a 12% decrease in breaches of the unsuitable accommodation order. However, the number of children in temporary accommodation rose again from 10,360 children in 2024 to 10,480 last year, while the number of households in temporary accommodation rose from 16,634 to 18,092.

There were 10,710 instances of households not being offered temporary accommodation, significantly higher than 7,565 instances in 2024. Assessments for housing support needs were carried out in 84% of cases where there was a duty to assess. Support was provided for 44% of all cases, while support was not provided for 4% of those who were identified as needing it.

Cabinet Secretary Calls for Review of LHA Freeze

Cabinet Secretary for Housing Màiri McAllan has [written](#) to the UK Government to call for the unfreezing of Local Housing Allowance rates, which were frozen in the UK Budget into 2026-27. She raised concern about the detrimental impact the freeze would have on homelessness and child poverty, noting 87 of the 90 LHA rates in Scotland will fall below the 30th percentile of local market rents.

The Cabinet Secretary also expressed concern with the Housing Benefit subsidy arrangements for the provision of temporary accommodation. She has urged Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government Steve Reed to review funding arrangements, which provide local authorities with subsidy equivalent to 90% of the 2011 LHA rate to cover temporary accommodation costs.

Finally, she called for detail on the new earned-income disregards in Housing Benefit for people in supported housing and temporary accommodation.

COSLA Publishes 2026-27 Non-Residential Social Care Charging Guidance

COSLA has published updated [guidance](#) for local authorities on non-residential social care charging. The HSEU engaged with COSLA and local authority partners to refine the guidance, which now calls on local authorities to reflect in contract values the additional administrative burden and financial risk placed on providers where they are asked to collect charges.